

Intersections and Divergences in Writing: Exploring Rhizomatic and Fragmentary Writing

JUSTINA ŠUMILOVA

Abstract: This article aims to analyze rhizomatic and fragmentary writing as well as their ethical standpoint. The article concludes that both rhizomatic and fragmentary writing have multiple entry points as well as aesthetically dispersed structure of patterns. Rhizomatic and fragmentary writing focus mainly on representation of unseen, unwritten and unconscious aspects of human's life which proves that both type of writing protest against the Symbolic order. Rhizomatic and fragmentary writing have a nomadic narrative voice that functions as a multiplicity and is constantly in a flux meaning that such identity is fractured and relational. Rhizomatic writing is able to produce ethical dimension which manifests via constant becoming, while fragmentary writing encourages responsibility.

Keywords: Rhizomatic writing, fragmentary writing, poethics

Introduction

Ferdinand de Saussure emphasized the importance of spoken word over writing. Jacques Derrida stated that writing has a different root distinct from speech which leads to misunderstandings of its foundation because attention is given primarily to speech. The most well-known poststructuralist philosopher who focused on writing was already mentioned Jacques Derrida who pointed out the negligence of writing in the Western Philosophy. Privilege of speech over writing in Western thought is based on assumption that speech is presence and thus considered to be more authentic (Nayar, 2009: 61).

Derrida called this privilege as Phonocentrism and invented the study of "Grammatology", the science of studying writing. However, Derrida was not the only one to analyze the concept of writing from metaphysical and ontological perspectives. Derrida's contemporary and a close friend, Maurice Blanchot, also focused on the concept of writing in his works, but from a rather distinct perspective. Writing is a very crucial ontological and metaphysical concept, always prevailing in all of his works.

One of the most interesting examples of writing style is Deleuze and Guattari's invented rhizomatic writing. Rhizomatic writing is a type of writing that has no beginning and an end, such writing style has multiple entry points and seeks to identify with becoming. Another interesting writing style is fragmentary writing which was practiced mostly by Maurice Blanchot. Fragmentary writing's function is to break the dialectic union of part and the whole to establish new possible connections and disrupt the regular form, create a possibility of a new form or transformation. Both writing styles have common features as well as crucial differences.

Writing style can be expressive and portray or create dimension of politics and ethics. Even though most of people are used to simple writing style, there are various writing styles that via aesthetics express ethical standpoints which makes writing style significant in creating and expressing ideas. Also, it is the framing in itself that generates experiences of meaning, value, identity and ethical substance, therefore every writing type requires philosophical and aesthetical investigation.

The aim of this article is to analyze rhizomatic and fragmentary writing. The article aims to pinpoint their similarities and common points as well as differences in these two styles of writing. The article aims to investigate the ontological aspect of both writing styles as well as their ethical dimension. The research aims to analyze the features of fragmentary and rhizomatic writing, and in the end of the research it aims to explain the ethical position of both styles of writing.

Poststructuralism's Attention to Writing

Poststructuralism is a philosophical and literary movement that emerged in the mid-20th century in France. Firstly, poststructuralism was a philosophical response to the movement of structuralism, particularly related to Levi Strauss. Poststructuralism seeks to critique the assumptions regarding the sources and nature of identity, and the rational, humanist subject of the Enlightenment as well as critique the conditions and foundations of knowledge. Poststructuralism also focuses on analyzing representational capacities of language and texts, foregrounding their intertextuality.

A very important element in understanding poststructuralist thinking is their usage of the Saussurean sign which is heavily related to the concept of writing. A sign consists of signifier and signified. Signifier is the word/sound, while signified is the concept. Signifier and signified links are based on difference between sounds and our ability to distinguish between them. Such link is arbitrary because the sound/word doesn't describe the object, but describes the idea of an object (Nayar, 2009: 19). For Saussure, signifier and signified are immaterial and psychological forms.

Poststructuralists didn't aim to destroy or reject Saussurean sign, but to revalorize it and question its stability. Saussurean sign is defined as a stable, immaterial construct, while poststructuralists aimed to prove otherwise and reveal structuralist exclusion and repression of certain aspects done by systematicity and structures. They have sought to get rid of centered theory and focus on multiple discourses arguing that signs of the metalanguage are themselves subject to slippage and indeterminacy (Stam, 1992: 23-24). Poststructuralists are interested in the process of constructing meaning rather than the sign itself. Poststructuralism does not consider the relationship between virtual signs, but rather the differences between signs in discourse.

Poststructuralists also emphasize the importance of intertextuality and the role of discourse by showing an interplay of differences among signifiers and discourse, arguing that the focus is on the creation of sense (Posner, 2011: 21). In reading, the meaning of the text is not related to one single meaning of the sender, but to multiple possible readings. Intertextuality divides the given discourse into components to create a network of links between them that replaces the chain of signs (Posner, 2011: 21).

Poststructuralists have sought to replace the signifier and challenged Saussure's neglect of materiality of the linguistic sign. The one to achieve this was Derrida who criticized privileging of the speech over writing. He pointed out that words have a material dimension and have sought to rematerialize the sign. Therefore, Derrida as well as other poststructuralists (exception being Blanchot who started to talk about writing from ontological and metaphysical perspectives earlier than poststructuralists did) started to talk about the importance of writing.

For Derrida, writing is the structure and the process that makes possible the dynamic character of language, but he saw writing as exterior to language because exteriority of the signifier is the exteriority of writing in general. He stated that there is no linguistic sign before writing or metaphysics of presence. Derrida in his book *Of Grammatology* attacked the privileging of speech over writing. Writing and language, he announced, was *différance*: a term that combines difference and deference (postponement) and the study of writing he called Grammatology (Chandler, 2017: 61). Derrida's concept of *différance* exemplifies the interplay of presence and absence within language, suggesting that words and signs can only define themselves through their difference from each other, not through any inherent essence. Rhizomatic and fragmentary writings often exploit the gaps and spaces between fragments or nodes, emphasizing how meaning is shaped as much by what is omitted as by what is included.

Derrida noted that the specificity of words is itself a material dimension. Writing is constantly accessible and unlike the voice, which fades away and can only be remembered, writing is not a virtual sign, but a manifestation, and it can therefore be taken as a basis for comparison in any discourse (Posner, 2011: 18).

Overall, Derrida as well as other poststructuralist attention given to writing sparked an investigation of writing's metaphysical, political and ethical dimensions. Here, we will seek to focus on discussing two writing styles that emerged during poststructuralist peaking in French society.

Fragmentary Writing as Aesthetic Ontology of Writing

Poststructuralism challenges the idea of a singular, authoritative meaning in texts. Writing, in this perspective, is seen not as a transparent medium for communication but as a field of play among various meanings and interpretations. All fragments are dispersed, and they don't have obvious connections to each other as there are always gaps that separate them.

Unlike conventional narratives that follow a clear, sequential path, fragmentary writing disrupts this linearity. Fragments allow for a narrative that is disjointed, presenting pieces of stories, thoughts, or images without a predefined order. This challenges the reader to engage in constructing the narrative, filling gaps between fragments with personal interpretation. Each fragment can stand alone as a separate piece with its inherent meaning or can be linked to other fragments to form a broader, yet not always cohesive, narrative. This open structure invites multiple interpretations, making the text dynamic and fluid rather than fixed.

Maurice Blanchot was not the first one to start to use fragments and fragmentary writing, however, his approach and usage of this technique was novel. Maurice Blanchot's fragmentary writing is oriented to the future. Repetition of fragments in the new forms in a crucial aspect of Blanchot's fragmentary writing because every repetition is different and unique in its own way. While Deleuze and Guattari also point out the fragment's importance in meaning production:

The ability to rearrange fragments continually in new and different patterns or configurations; and as a consequence, an indifference toward the act of producing and toward the product, toward the set of instruments to be used and toward the over-all result to be achieved (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 7).

Fragments are important in the process of production as they are the components needed for the formation of something new. Every fragment has a future bond with another fragment because they can have future relationships. Fragmentary writing is also rebellious to itself because it persists sovereign disobedience from any kind of authority, even its own. When fragment become independent from totalization, it stops to be identified as a fragment (Hill, 2012: 7). To quote Blanchot:

But the fragmentary, of which there is no experience, also escapes us. Silence does not take its place; scarcely even does reticence—the reticence of that which can no longer keep still, not knowing, anymore, how to speak (Blanchot, 1995: 28)

Writing has the ability to free the sign from its subservience to reality or presence which it was supposed to serve. This resonates especially with fragmentary writing as a process of textual production because it separates and introduces a certain meaning that is isolated from other fragments. Taken, combined and experimented with, these fragments can produce a new meaning by repetition (Hill, 2012: 6).

Fragmentary writing, just like rhizomes, has no beginning and no end, and such writing is always in the middle and never at the start to its end. Also, fragmentary as well as rhizomatic writing is a nomadic form of writing whose components are in continuous motion. Blanchot's fragmentary writing is able to detach itself from itself creating a dissociation of oneself that present a subject in multiple self-repetitions. Detaching shows multiple versions of the same, it repeats itself, always in a different manner, manifesting self-referral and self-displacement (Hill, 2012: 10). Fragment can

never have its own fixed identity, and it avoids any identification which makes the identity non-existent, temporary, situational and momentary.

Fragmentary writing requires new ways of thinking it because it is not contained within a complete form or the traditional structures of language and has no fixed norms making it hard to approach from an angle which can be considered to be the “right one”. Such writing is not “pure” because it always coexists with other forms of existence, speech, thought and temporality that make it possible. There is no right way of understanding fragmentary writing, but it can give us a new perspective to understand the world.

Rhizomatic Writing: Decentering of Writing with Rhizomes and Fragments

Rhizomatic writing is decentered into other dimensions and other register (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987:8). Rhizome type of poetics produce opposite movements, and the fragmentation of forms and images becomes one of its basic principles. Rhizomatic writing has nothing to do with signifying. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari relate rhizomatic writing to surveying and mapping as rhizome is able to create a structure that is not apparent:

The rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight. It is tracings that must be put on the map, not the opposite. In contrast to centered (even polycentric) systems with hierarchical modes of communication and preestablished paths, the rhizome is an acentered, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system without a General and without an organizing memory or central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 21)

As Deleuze and Guattari point out, a rhizome establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power and circumstances relative to the arts, science and social struggle (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 8). Just like rhizomatic writing, fragmentary writing has multiple entry points that allows to start reading the text from any kind of fragment without losing any kind of coherence of the text or meaning. It is not a static text that has only one entry text as a start. Rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized and attributed.

On the other hand, rhizome is a structure of a plant that has dispersed roots that do not connect to each other but produce various ways for entry. Rhizomatic writing has no single centre, but instead has a scattered web of poly-located centres. Deleuze and Guattari compare rhizome with multiplicities that are able to express multiple points of view:

The point is that a rhizome or multiplicity never allows itself to be overcoded, never has available a supplementary dimension over and above its number of lines, that is, over and above the multiplicity of numbers attached to those lines. All multiplicities are flat, in the sense that they fill or occupy all of their dimensions: we will therefore speak of a plane of consistency of multiplicities, even though the dimensions of this “plane” increase with the number of connections that are made on it. Multiplicities are defined by the outside: by the abstract line, the line of flight or deterritorialization according to which they change in nature and connect with other multiplicities (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 30).

In this quote, the multiplicities that we face in rhizomatic and fragmentary writing can be related to Maurice Blanchot’s concept of the Outside. Blanchot’s concept of the Outside functions as the possibility to discover new meanings by going outside already defined roles of meaning in language. Therefore, multiplicities, which can be seen in the form of fragments in both rhizomatic and fragmentary writing, allow to go outside of defined meaning structures.

In poststructuralism, meaning is seen as contingent, constructed in and through language, and never finalized. Both rhizomatic writing exemplify this by allowing meanings to emerge through connections between textual segments that are not pre-determined and can be reconfigured by the reader.

The aim of fragmentary writing as well as rhizomatic writing is not to give a unified meaning, but to give various ways and interpretations, to create a plurality of possible meaning and signification.

Poststructuralist deconstruction of traditional structures and its emphasis on the instability of meaning, the plurality of interpretation, and the rejection of absolute truths is crucial in understanding rhizomatic and fragmentary writing.

Rhizomatic and fragmentary writing are particularly innovative as they allow to disconnect and connect all kinds of possible meanings. Such writing gives the opportunity for expression of new epistemological frames of conducting meaning and signification that is closer to the postmodern way of living.

Blanchot's fragmentary is different from rhizomatic writing because it is related to separation and brokenness as well as phenomenon of endless fragmentation. Rhizomatic narratives are expansive, sprawling across a horizontal plane of association and linkage. Fragmentary narratives, however, are often introspective, focusing on the disjunctions and ruptures within the narrative flow.

From Unconscious Drives to Articulation

Both rhizomatic and fragmentary writing challenge and expands the boundaries of traditional narrative forms. Fragments capture fleeting moments, thoughts, or emotions, emphasizing the transient nature of human experiences and perceptions. This can lead to a more intense, though fragmented, reflection on emotions and feelings. The fragments can be related to the Kristeva's concept of the semiotic. Kristeva defines two concepts in her philosophy – the semiotic that is related to rhythms and drives and the symbolic – that is related to the language and signification.

Kristeva's semiotic can suggest a plane of resistance to the symbolic order. Since semiotic is more related to rhythms, tonalities and senses, it has the potential to disrupt and remake the symbolic order because passive rhythms interrupt our reason, speech and experience. Kristeva's *semanalysis* is oriented towards pre-signification and pre-conscious work which manifests in literature, and thus literature shows the production of senses in language (Kristeva, 1982: 38). While rhizomatic writing is related to these semiotics chains:

A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 7).

Therefore, the work can use Kristeva's *semanalysis* which states that body is in language and that logic of signification is already present in maternal body and that bodily drives make their way into language. Basically, in language we signify meaning, while the rhizomatic and fragmentary writings are more related to the drives and rhythms.

Rhizomatic and fragmentary writings are able to reveal the unconscious drives and rhythms that are not included into the symbolic order and regular type of writing.

The poetical function of rhizomatic writing is that it is focused more on desire and rhythms. Therefore, the poetical way of rhizomatic writing produces its own hidden meaning and hidden desire that is impossible to penetrate because the poetics of the text hide it. As Blanchot states:

Desire can be applied to writing and secret as the desire refracts into multitude of hidden or deceptively manifest desires producing the effect of nonarbitrariness in variety of ways like anagram, rhythm, interior rhyme, magical play of letter and this effect makes the most reasonable language a contaminated process and rich in what it cannot say (Blanchot, 1995: 130).

Rhizomatic type of writing also follows different signification. As in Blanchot's fragmentary writing case, some fragments can signify nothing. Not every single fragment can have some sort of articulated meaning, and some of them can be empty signifiers. Such example could be Blanchot's enigmatic writing on "secret". Blanchot defines the secret and puts the whole text in quotation marks without leaving any reference, thus leaving the reader wondering whether this text is created by the author or whether it is quoted from someone's else work (Blanchot, 1995: 130):

To keep a secret—to refrain from saying some particular thing—presupposes that one could say it. This is nothing remarkable: it is merely a rather unpleasant kind of restraint. —Even so, it does relate to the

question of the secret in general: to the fact (it is no fact) of wondering whether the secret is not linked to there being still something left to say when all is said; it does suggest Saying (with its glorious capital), always in excess of everything said. —The not-apparent in the whole when it is totally manifest; that which withdraws, hides in the demand that all be disclosed: the dark of the clearing or the error of truth itself. — The un- knowledge after absolute knowledge which does not, precisely, allow us to conceive of any 'after' Such marking thus creates a secret – we do not know whether this text was quoted or it is just the author's created illusion for the reader. Such type of writing creates the enigma and yet the signification of the words becomes of secondary focus (Blanchot, 1995: 130).

Blanchot's fragmentary writing is a process of creating fragment pieces that form and have their own independent meaning not forming any kind of whole unity. Such dispersion of the fragmentary mode of writing can be compared with the postmodern way of living as we receive multiple fragmentary meanings in various fragmented forms.

Also, poststructuralists assert that meaning is not fixed and can be broken into fragments that do not necessarily link to an overarching singular narrative. This idea is mirrored in fragmentary writing, where the narrative is intentionally segmented into discrete pieces that may not sew together neatly, embodying the poststructuralist idea that meanings are multiple and texts are open-ended. The form of the fragmentary writing allows to experiment and work with the possible multiple meanings. Such frame of epistemological expression also creates a very specific relationship between the text and the reader in which the reader doesn't read the full coherent text but reads it as fragments that are separate from each other.

Fragmented writing resembles the structure of our mind. We don't have a coherent, linear and full understanding of our memory and mind. Instead, we have fragments formed by certain sensations, emotions, thoughts or impressions that are molded and remolded in our minds as we give them new meanings or modifications over time. Fragments of the memory are transmuted experiences of our perception. Fragment memories are simplified to create a coherent and simple meaning of certain events, thus fragmented writing not only depicts our mind, but reveals the diversity and multiplicity of our mind that we neglect. Just like fragmentary writing, rhizomatic writing shows a dispersed way of writing that is a more accurate resemblance of our mind processes.

Rhizomatic writing can be considered to be the opposite of creating one united prehension. Usually, human beings form meaning by unifying certain segments of reality. However, in the case of rhizomatic writing, such unification and simplification of the seen reality becomes harder and unlikely. Therefore, rhizomatic writing seeks to show not the unity, but diversity in meaning and the fact that we usually are learnt to simplify the reality we perceive as reality.

Nomadic Narrative Identity

Poststructuralism argues that conventional hierarchical structures of understanding are not only arbitrary but also oppressive. Similarly, rhizomatic and fragmentary writings abolish traditional hierarchical narrative structures, promoting a non-linear, non-hierarchical model of textuality that resembles a network or a web. This creates multiple, and potentially infinite, interpretations and paths through the text. Similarly, rhizomatic and fragmentary writings often decentralize the narrative voice, creating spaces for multiple voices and perspectives that challenge singular, authoritative interpretations.

Rhizomatic writing functions as a deterritorialising agency that dislodges the subject from his or her sense of unified and consolidated identity. Rhizomatic writing produces a sparsely and fragmentary identity in the text. Such identity may seem to be too much fractured to be able to identify itself, however, we can compare sparsely rhizomatic identity with the self that functions as a container for self-realization and understanding. The self usually functions as a container for one's mind that helps to reflect on oneself.

The scattered rhizomatic identity, on the other hand, functions as unbridged and disconnected multiplicity. Just like nomadic subject, rhizomatic writing pushes the subject to one's limits:

Becomings are like writing, it is a composition, a location that needs to be constructed together with in the encounters with others. Becoming push the subject to his or her limits, in a constant encounter with external, different otherness and such nomadic subject as a non-unitary entity is simultaneously self-propelling and outward-bound (Braidotti, 2013: 348)

Such multiplicity doesn't have one main point of one's identity, it doesn't have a stable and defined self, but instead of that it is diverse in its nature. Such identity is liminal, relational and possible to perceive in a moment when it appears. On the other moment, such identity is radically different and constantly changing. The nomadic narrative is the confrontation of the limits of the subjectivity because we confront the anonymity at the heart of communication.

Rhizomatic, as well as fragmentary writing, presents an impersonal narrative voice that is cold and seductive and produces a certain invisibility of the narrative voice. Such identity becomes unseen and scattered, fragmented and fractured, therefore, sparsed and hard to locate to one precise point. Such narrative voice is always becoming Other and never being the same and stable; what we experience here is Levinas' *il y a*, the anonymous "there is" of existence. The nomadic narrative gives the opportunity to experience the impersonal process of becoming that allows to experience radical Otherness that is outside of myself.

Usually, we are used to coherent identities that have a clear and simplified narrative. However, nomadic identity doesn't include any kind of Freudian repression and instead focuses on showing the unconscious and unseen drives. Since there is a lack of repression, there is a lack of formation of the regular identity as such identity reveals all the unconscious rhythms. However, such identity still has signifiers that signify all kinds of processes, unconscious and conscious.

Nomadic narrative identity is also rebelling against the cultural and Symbolic norms of the formation of the subject. It functions as a transgression of the societal and cultural norms. Such nomadic narrative identity can be compared to Deleuze and Guattari's anomalous individual that is able to be the first of the pack to bring the changes.

Anomalous, the Outsider, has several functions: not only does it border each multiplicity, of which it determines the temporary or local stability (with the highest number of dimensions possible under the circumstances), not only is it the precondition for the alliance necessary to becoming, but it also carries the transformations of becoming or crossings of multiplicities always farther down the line of flight (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 249). Nomadic identity also functions as an anomalous individual that is able to bring change and shift.

Deleuze and Guattari state that in the multiplicity there is an exceptional individual with whom one has to open up a relationship in order to become. Anomalous individual functions as an individual or species member, a collective view of the assemblage giving the main idea of the group. Nomadic narrative identity functions in an impersonal manner through multiple poetic voices that are decoupled from the common circuit of emotion.

Rhizomatic Poethics: Ethics of Becoming

A question arises: can rhizomatic writing be related to poethical expressions? Blanchot stated that literature and poetry is always ethical and revolve around ethical manners. Poetics is also related to performance, and it is able to shape the subjectivity of the performer and one's ethical standpoint.

Freud shows how relations between poetics details, interactions, bodies and spaces engender transcendent meanings through processes of condensation and displacement (Brigs, 2015: 254). Also, both rhizomatic writing challenges traditional linear narratives and embraces complexities that reflect poststructuralist views on textuality and ethics.

The way one is expressing oneself in style is a way to produce and create an ethical narrative. Poetic language has an ability to express and access aspects of experience that are silenced in normal discourse (O'Brien, 2019: 7). Poetics as a form of expression which is able to show what kind of ethics

the writing and creating subject is able to portray in one's manner of writing. Any making of forms out of language (poesis) is a practice with a discernible character (ethos) (O'Brien, 2019: 2).

Rhizomatic writing emphasises a radical ethics of transformation in opposition to the normative moral protocols. The ethics of becoming, as conceptualized particularly within the framework of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, fundamentally challenges traditional ethical systems that are based on fixed categories and identity-based norms. It proposes a fluid and dynamic conception of subjectivity and ethics that emphasizes transformation, multiplicity, and the continuous intersections with the 'Other'.

In Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, becoming represents a departure from static being or identity to a state of constant flux and transformation. This ethical view encourages individuals to embrace a more fluid conception of identity that is not restricted by pre-defined societal roles or labels. It promotes the idea that one's identity is always incomplete and perpetually in the process of formation, influenced by interactions with various entities and forces.

Deleuze and Guattari's becoming-woman, becoming-animal and becoming imperceptible as these ways of becoming are ethical in their nature as they provide the minoritarian becoming. Becoming stresses the interconnectedness of all beings and entities, highlighting how individual actions and transformations affect others within a shared ecosystem. In this light, ethics is not a code of conduct applied to isolated individuals but a dynamic network of interactions where each entity's evolution impacts the whole. This approach fosters a sense of responsibility towards others and the environment, emphasizing that ethical actions consider the broader effects of one's behavior.

When we become animal, become woman or become molecular, we change our perspective (without taking the perspective of the animal or woman) as we open ourselves to new possibilities and multiplicities. Such openness can help to create a dialogical relationship with the Other.

Also, rhizomatic type of poetics produces fragmentation of forms and images and transgresses unitary semantics by using disorders and gaps of form and meaning to create a new perception of reality. The production of an aesthetical shape and form is able to produce a certain type of ethics as well as function as a resistance to certain forms of power. Rhizomatic poetics are thus characterized by the nomadic circulation of images, a process that transposes a poly- and hypersensory reality, felt at the level of reception by interference flashes (Conkan, 2022: 170).

Such a writing can provide the multiplicity of ethical positions to show the infinite possibility of ethics in the written discourse, specifically the ethics of becoming. The collision of meanings in rhizomatic writing opens up the possibility for a new kind of ethics that could be related to fragmentation and unity.

Ethics is the discourse about forces, desires and values that act as empowering modes of becoming (Braidotti, 2013: 343). Rhizomatic writing, like nomadic identity, prefers to look for the ways in which otherness prompts, mobilises and allows for flows of affirmation of values and forces which are not yet sustained by the current social and historical conditions (Braidotti, 2013: 343).

Fragmentary Poethics: Responsibility

Fragmentary writing, by its nature, challenges the conventional narrative structures that often seek to present a unified, cohesive understanding of events and subjects. Its fragmented form mirrors the complexity of human experiences and the multiplicity of perspectives, particularly in the context of ethical and existential reflections about the Other—whether in a personal or societal sense. Also, unlike traditional narratives that strive to provide a complete and closed story, fragmentary texts highlight what is not said—gaps and silences become as significant as the text itself. There is always a stranger, a some short of alien or alternative unknown one unnamed in language in Blanchot's writing, hidden in language or yet to be named. Therefore, this is the Other that hides in the gap. Such gap can be neutral, destructive and closed to language, but it can also function as possibility.

Fragmentary writing can create an ethical standpoint and relationship with the Other. The fragmentary and nomadic relationship with the other is sparse and innovative as it allows the other to see the fragmentary narrative that can express the traumas. For example, Maurice Blanchot in his fragmentary book *L'Écriture du désastre* is talking about the Holocaust and the Jewish tragedy of the Second World War. Blanchot's fragmentary style does not simplify or reduce the horrors of trauma, such as the Holocaust, to a single narrative thread. Instead, it attempts to capture the bewildering, disjointed experience of trauma itself. This approach can be seen as carrying a kind of ethical responsibility to truthfully represent the fragmented nature of such experiences.

Blanchot does not use traditional ways of writing about the subject and the psyche, however, his works revolve around the issues of the subject. Basically, he talks about trauma state, stagnation of the thought, survival state and introduces fragmentary writing to talk about the unspeakable, unthinkable, unwritten and unconscious because such unarticulated things don't have united form, they are scattered.

Verbal play in the fragments promotes an understanding of the logos as a floating verbal phenomenon: the written word, while it articulates a cosmology of cyclical change, the text of the fragment itself imposes a substantive tension between movement and limitation. Every fragment is an individual part of textual process and their essence is a deferral of completion.

Blanchot's book is written in fragments and focuses on the ethics of the Other. "*L'Écriture du désastre*" is a fragmentary and rhizomatic text that seeks to talk about such issues as responsibility. Blanchot states that we are all created responsible, and that my responsibility is anterior to my birth. He also defines that we all have responsibility for the Other which presupposes an overturning such that it can only be marked by a change in the status of "me":

If responsibility is rooted where there is no foundation, where no root can lodge itself, and if thus it tears clean through all bases and cannot be assumed by any individual being, how then, how otherwise than as response to the impossible, and through a relation which forbids me to posit myself at all (Blanchot, 1995: 34)

Responsibility is a radical response to the Other than can happen in a fragmentary form. In such away the impersonal narrative voice takes the responsibility of the Other. For Blanchot, responsibility makes us mute as it is always disastrous in its nature because it creates a burden of the Other. Blanchot also relates responsibility with writing:

It comes without arriving in the patience of the unrecountable era. This is the era destined to the intermittence of a language unburdened of words and dispossessed, the silent halt of that to which without obligation one must nonetheless answer. And such is the responsibility of writing—writing which distinguishes itself by deleting from itself all distinguishing marks, which is to say perhaps, ultimately, by effacing itself (Blanchot, 1995: 41).

In this quote, Blanchot has in mind writing as a passivity and fragmentary in its nature that loses its distinguishing marks. This quote is discussing the paradoxical nature of writing and language. The concept of responsibility in writing highlights the idea that writing involves a process of deletion and erasure to reveal deeper meanings. The mention of writing that "distinguishes itself by deleting from itself all distinguishing marks" could imply a form of writing that transcends traditional boundaries and definitions.

Thus, writing is a present moment that detaches us from the surrounding material world to free us from material exteriority and immaterial interiority because writing is the full manifestation of something that is in a virtual state, the detachment of meaning from the event without cancelling the fundamental structure of discourse (Ricour, 1976: 25).

Blanchot discusses writing as an act that is inherently ethical. Writing fragmentarily underscores this by focusing on the act of writing itself as a form of response to the impossibility of fully capturing or representing the Other. The fragmentary nature of the text reflects the ongoing, never-complete task of responding ethically to the alterity of the Other.

Conclusions

Poststructuralism is a response movement to structuralism which aims to deconstruct traditional structures and put an emphasis on rethinking the instability of meaning, the plurality of interpretation, and the rejection of absolute truths. Poststructuralism as a movement paid a lot of attention to writing as an ethical and metaphysical form. The article aimed to analyze two types of writing: fragmentary writing and rhizomatic writing. Fragmentary writing was deployed by Maurice Blanchot, while rhizomatic writing – by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

Fragmentary writing breaks away from linear, chronological narratives and instead presents a scattered or non-sequential arrangement of text. This lack of conventional structure allows for multiple, and often conflicting, interpretations. Rhizomatic writing emphasizes fluidity and connection, creating a web of interlinked points that suggest perpetual openness and multiplicity.

Rhizomatic writing, as well as fragmentary writing, has multiple entry points and breaks the consistent traditional narrative structure. On the other hand, rhizomatic writing operates more like a network. There isn't a singular beginning or end. The narrative branches out in various directions, potentially looping back on itself or branching further with ideas and plot points that connect in multiple, often unexpected ways.

Rhizomatic narratives are expansive, sprawling across a horizontal plane of association and linkage. Fragmentary narratives, however, are often introspective, focusing on the disjunctions and ruptures within the narrative flow. However, both rhizomatic and fragmentary writings are innovative as they allow the creation of the new kind of relations and express the multiplicity of meanings.

Rhizomatic and fragmentary writing is also able to show the unconscious and unseen drives in the form of the semiotics. Rhizomatic or fragmentary identity transgresses against culture and Symbolic norms of the society. Rhizomatic and fragmentary writing can be compared to Deleuze and Guattari's anomalous individual that carries the transformation of becoming. Both rhizomatic and fragmentary writing produce a nomadic narrative identity. Rhizomatic or fragmentary writing doesn't have a stable and defined narrative voice and therefore is relational and momentary.

Rhizomatic poetics is able to produce ethics that functions as a resistance to forms of power. Rhizomatic writing encourages ethical fluidity. Poetics, particularly in the context of rhizomatic writing, serves not just as a style or aesthetic choice but as a potent ethical force. Through the destabilization of fixed meanings and the celebration of multiplicity, rhizomatic writing fosters radical ethics that opposes normative moral codes which are often based on rigid categories and identities. Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'becoming'—whether becoming-woman, becoming-animal, or becoming-imperceptible—illustrates this ethical stance. These processes of transformation stress the interconnectedness of all beings and challenge conventional societal roles and labels.

Blanchot's fragmentary writing is related to the ethical position of talking about the unspeakable, unthinkable and traumas. On the other hand, Blanchot's philosophy on the fragmentary can help to establish the realm of ethics and responsibility as one is responsible for what one writes. Therefore, dispersed fragmentary identity is still able to be responsible for oneself and ethically respond to various circumstances that require an ethical standpoint.

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